

# Lantern Tours Return to Light up Fridays at First State Heritage Park

**DOVER** – On Friday evenings at 8:30 p.m. this summer, DNREC's First State Heritage Park's lantern tours of The Green and three of Dover's historic cemeteries will entertain with stories from Dover's history.

- The Green

Friday, July 19, August 16 and September 6

- Old Methodist Cemetery

Friday, July 26, and August 9

- Christ Episcopal Churchyard

Friday, August 2

- Presbyterian Churchyard Cemetery

Friday, August 23

Take a walk through Dover's history by the light of a lantern on one of the four evening tours offered by the park:

## **Lantern Tour of the Dover Green**

Meet at the John Bell House on The Green

Join historical interpreters from the First State Heritage Park dressed in colonial attire as they relate the stories of historic Dover. Dover's public square was the site of markets and fairs, suffragists and abolitionists, soldiers and slaves, lawmakers and law breakers. Hear tales of the most infamous resident of Dover's jail, of devastating fires that threatened the town, of poisonings and tragic love.

## **Old Methodist Cemetery**

Meet at the Johnson Victrola Museum Parking Lot – 375 S. New Street

The stories of those buried in this historic cemetery help reveal the meanings behind the elaborate rituals associated with death and mourning in the 19th-century as you are guided among the ornately decorated tombstones of the Wesley United Methodist Church's historic cemetery. Uncover the meanings of the carefully chosen and crafted funeral art that decorates the tombs of the high and low alike and what those symbols might reveal about the people buried beneath them. Varied and often unusual funerary customs of the Victorian Period will be revealed including mourning clothes and customs and how the Civil War helped develop methods of preserving the dead.

### **Christ Episcopal Churchyard**

Meet at Christ Church – At the corner of S. State & Water Streets

Encounter characters from the past to hear not only tales of the tombstones, but also tales of joy and sorrow from those who are laid to rest within the walls of the churchyard. From Caesar Rodney's unrequited love to Civil War opponents buried within yards of one another, be prepared for a surprise or two on this unique tour.

### **Presbyterian Churchyard Cemetery**

Meet at the Johnson Victrola Museum Parking Lot – 375 S. New Street

Visit by lantern light the Presbyterian Church of Dover's historic cemetery, where many prominent Delawareans and their families are buried. Among them is Delaware's great statesman John M. Clayton and Revolutionary War martyr Colonel John Haslet, who died a hero's death at the Battle of Princeton in 1777. Meet these figures from Dover history along with Revolutionary War hero Major John Patton, 19th-century Dover's James Fulton who was the first resident of Rose Cottage, and several 18th-century Dover widows with decided opinions about their husbands!

Admission to all lantern tours this summer is \$10. All summer tours begin at 8:30 p.m. Space is limited; call (302) 739-9194

to reserve your lantern. Lantern tours cancelled due to inclement weather will not be rescheduled.

The churchyard tours are made possible with the cooperation of the Presbyterian Church of Dover, Christ Episcopal Church and Wesley United Methodist Church.

The First State Heritage Park is Delaware's first urban "park without boundaries," linking historic and cultural sites in the city that has been the seat of state government since 1777. The park is a partnership of state agencies under the leadership of DNREC's Division of Parks & Recreation, working in collaboration with city and county government, nonprofit organizations and the private sector.

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